[English]

Idle Aerodroms in West Bengal

985. SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that several aerodroms remain non-functional or have become idle in different parts of West Bengal;

(b) if so, names of those idle aerodroms;

(c) whether there is any proposal to utilise these aerodroms;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) In West Bengal four airoports viz. Balurghat, Behala, Cooch Behar and Malda are non-functional.

(c) to (e) These airports are suitable for operation of Dornier 22 (20 seater) aircraft. No airline has indicated interest in operating this type of aircraft to these stations. At present, AAI has no plans to upgrade these airports.

Unserviceable Telephones in Allahabad

986. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephones in Allahabad lying unserviceable;

(b) the reasons for inordinate delay in making them operational;

(c) the number of persons in the waiting list for new telephone connections in Allahabad;

(d) the time by which new connections are likely to be given to them;

(e) when the telephone Directory for Allahabad was issued last and when the new Directory is likely to be issued; and

(f) the measures taken to tone up the working of the telephones in Allahabad?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) 604 as on 21.2.97.

(b) There is no case pending for more than 15 days. There are a few cases pending for more than a week's time due to theft and multiple and scattered cable faults. These are being attended to vigorously.

(c) 5556 as on 31.1.97.

(d) The waiting list of the applicants in part (c) as on 31.1.97 is likely to be cleared by March, 98.

(e) The last telephone directory was issued in April, 95. New directory is under print and is likely to be issued to the subscribers in the month of March, 1997.

(f) The following remedial measures have been taken for improving the telephone services at Allahabad :

(i) Computerisation and Fault Repair Service.

(ii) Replacement of over head alignments by under-ground cables.

(iii) Use of insulated wire/drop wire in place of bare iron wire.

(iv) RLUs (Remore line unit) exchanges are being opened to reduce cable conductors lengths in local loop.

(v) The rural exchanges are being upgraded to higher capacity digital exchanges.

(vi) For further reducing the faults and to improve the services a programme of upgradation of the out door plant has been launched.

Pitfalls in International Film Festival of India

987. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether some pitfalls were noticed in the 28th International Film Festival of India held at Thiruvananthapuram on January 10, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this year's Indian Panorama screened at the IFFI had far fewer films than in the previous years; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) No serious shortcoming was noticed during 28th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held at Thiruvananthapuram. Films from about 47 countries participated in the Festival, with special emphasis on films from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A maximum of 21 feature and 21 non-feature films can be selected for the Indian Panorama every year. The Selection is done by selection panel consisting of eminent persons from all over the country. Since the selection is done on merit by the selection panel, the number of films selected varies from year to year. This year the selection panel found 14 feature films and 16 non-feature films suitable for inclusion in the Indian Panorama.

Inadequate Arrangements of Potable Water

988. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that New Bongaigaon, Nalbari, Barpeta Road, Rangiya and